

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 0192

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT DA

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT FORMATION NO 2-SECOND ROUND

REF:COPENHAGEN 0120

SUMMARY. AFTE A SECOND ROUND OF INTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS
BETWEEN PRIMIN HARTLING AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ON THE
ONE HAND AND THE PARTIES OF THE CENTER ON THE OTHER
PARLIAMENT WILL OPEN JAN 23 WITH HIS LIBERALS CARRYING
ON AS A SINGLE PARTY MINORITY GOVERNMENT. SINCE HARTLING
WAS UNABLE IN HIS NEGOTIATIONS TO FIND A SECURE
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BASE OF PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT HIS GOVERNMENT

MAY NOT SURVIVE THE FIRST SUBSTANTIAL LEGISLATIVE
HURDLE. END SUMMARY

1. HARTLINGS SECOND ROUND OF INTERPARTY TALKS
COMMENCED JAN 15 WITH THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WHO
RECOMMENDED THAT HE DETERMINE WHETHER THE SIX PARTIES
WHICH BACKED HIS TAX REDUCTION LEGISLATION IN SEPTEMBER
STILL SUPPORTED THE SAVINGS MEASURED NECESSARY TO
FINANCE THAT SEVEN BILLION KRONER (\$1.2 BILLION)
TAX REDUCTION. WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THOSE CENTER
PARTIES PLUS THE TOLERATION OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS
THE GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET HAS NO PROSPECT
OF PASSAGE. BEHIND THE SOCIAL
DEMOCRATIC PROPOSAL LAY THE BELIEF THAT ONCE IT WAS
CLEAR THE GOVERNMENT WAS UNABLE TO PASS EVEN
THAT BASIC PIECE OF LEGISLATION HARTLING WOULD BE
FORCED TO RESIGN.

2. HE REMAINDER OF THE SECOND ROUND DISCLOSED AS
THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HAD SUSPECTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT
DOES NOT PRESENTLY HAVE SUFFICIENT SUPPORT FOR ITS
SAVINGS PROPOSALS. ALTHOUGH GIVE OF THE SIX PARTIES
STOOD BY THEIR COMMITMENTS THE CONSERVATIVES WITHDREW
THEIR BACKING FOR THE REDUCTION OF FAMILY SUPPORT
SUBSIDIES BY GRADUATING THE BENEFIT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
INCOME, A RELATIVELY LARGE ITEM IN THE SAVINGS PACKAGE.
CONSERVATIVE PARTY CHAIRMAN POUL SCHLUTER DEMANDED AS A
PRE CONDITION TO ANY COMMITMENT OF SUPPORT THAT THE
GOVERNMENT CHOOSE DEFINITELY AS ITS MAIN PARLIAMENTARY
SUPPORT PARTY EITHER THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OR GLISTRUPS
PROGRESSIVES. THE CONSERVATIVE TACTIC OF COURSE WAS
TO FORCE HARTLING EITHER TO ACCEPT THE SUPPORT OF
GLISTRUPS PROGRESSIVES OR RESIGN. BOTH HILMAR
BAUNSGAARD OF THE RADICAL PARTY AND JENS MOLLER OF THE
CHRISTIAN PEOPLES PARTY IMMEDIATELY BLOCKED THE FORMER
POSSIBILITY BY ANNOUNCING THEIR FIRM OPPOSITION TO ANY
FORMAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT OR EVEN NEGOTIATION AT
THE SAME TABLE WITH GLISTRUP

3. OVER THE WEEKEND AFTER IT BECAME CLEAR THAT HARTLING
COULD FIND NO FEASIBLE BASE FOR A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT
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EXTRA PARLIAMENTARY PRESSURE WAS GENERATED IN SEVERAL
QUARTERS TO FORCE HIM TO MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS IN
ORDER TO FORM A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC-LIBERAL MAJORITY
GOVERNMENT. IN A FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL JAN 17
DENMARK'S LARGEST TABLOID, BT CALLED FOR JUST SUCH A
COALITION WITH A NEW FIGURE AS PRIME MINISTER. IN AN
OPEN LETTER TO HARTLING ON SATURDAY 19 PROMINENT DANES
ALSO CALLED FOR AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES.

ON SUNDAY POLITIKEN PROPOSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT GIVE UP ITS STUBBORN DEFENSE OF ITS OWN "CRISIS PLAN" AND COMPROMISE ON SOME FORM OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY. A PRIVATE MEETING BETWEEN HARTLING AND JORGENSEN JAN 20 HOWEVER MERELY RECONFIRMED THAT THE DEEP CHASM BETWEEN THE SOCIALIST AND NON SOCIALISTS SIDES OF THE FOLKETING AND BETWEEN THE TWO RIVAL LEADERS WAS UNBRIDGEABLE.

4. THE SECOND ROUND ALSO CLARIFIED THE POSITION OF THE RADICAL PARTY. A A LAST MINUTED EFFORT TO BRING THE RADICALS BACK INTO ALLIANCE WITH THE LIBERAL-LED CENTER BLOC HARTLING ON JAN 21 OFFERED THE RADICALS AND THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLES PARTY MINISTERIAL POSTS IN A LIBERAL RADICAL CHRISTIAN COALITION GOVERNMENT. THIS WAS REJECTED BY BAUNSGAARD ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE RADICALS STILL FAVORED THE FORMATION OF A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT IN FACT THE RADICALS ARE DETERMINED TO REMAIN UNCOMMITTED BUT ARE LEANING CLOSED TO THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IT APPEARS THE RADICALS HAVE AGREED TO ORGANIZE THE NEW PARLIAMENT (COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS ELECTION OF THE PRESIDUM) IN CONCERT WITH THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS A MOVE WHICH COULD GIVE THE TWO PARTIES CONTROL OF MANY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SHIPS. ALTHOUGH THE RADICALS COULD STILL INTRODUCE A MOTION REQUESTING HARTLINGS RESIGNATION IN ORDER TO CLEAR THE WAY FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS ON A NEW GOVERNMENT THEY HAVE BACKED OFF ON THIS TACTIC RECENTLY AFTER THE INTER PARTY TALKS DISCLOSED THE NEAR IMPOSSIBILITY OF ANY SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LIBERAL COOPERATION EVEN UNDER RADICAL LEADERSHIP.

5. AT THIS READING ON THE EVE OF THE NEW PARLIAMENTS CONVENING THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO CONTINUE CONFIDENTIAL

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AT LEAST UNTIL SUCH TIME AS ITS PROGRAM IS SUCCESSFULLY OPPOSED BY A MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT. A KEY LIBERAL PARLIAMENTARIAN ARNE CHRISTIANSEN TOLD THE POLCOUNS JAN 21 THAT NO REAL FIREWORKDS WERE EXPECTED UNTIL NEXT WEEK WHEN THE GOVERNMENT WILL SUBMIT MORE THAN A SCORE OF INDIVIDUAL BUDGET PROPOSALS CONCERNED WITH SAVINGS TO OFFSET THE TAX REDUCTION PASSED LAST SEPTEMBER (THE LIBERSL "CRISIS PLAN 75" HAS BEEN PUT TEMPORARILY ON THE SHELF) CHRISTIANSEN SAID THAT THE LIBERALS WOULD PROCEED COOLLY AND CALMLY WITH THESE PROPOSALS IN THE HOPE OF ATTRACTING THE NECESSARY SUPPORT FOR THEIR PASSAGE.HE NOTED HOWEVER THAT MOGENS GLISTRUP OF THE PROGRESS PARTY HAS ALRADY PROMISED TO RE INTRODUCE HIS BILL ABOLISHING THE GOVERNMENT'S TAX ON LARGE HOME APPLIANCES. LIBERAL MINISTER OF HOUSING AND

LABOR PHILIPSEN TOLD ANOTHER EMBOFF JAN 22 THAT HE
EXPECTED THE DOWNFALL OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE
NEAR FUTURE.

6. THE GOVERNMENT WILL FACE IT FIRST MAJOR HURDLE NEXT
WEEK ON ITS TAX SAVINGS MEASURES. HARTLING IS GAMBLING
THAT THE CENTER PARTIES AND GLISTRUP'S PROGRESSIVES
WILL RALLY TO HIS SUPPORT WHEN FACED WITH THE ALTERNATIVE
OF A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC MINORITY GOVERNMENT. GIVEN THE
BALANCE OF POWER IN THE NEW PARLIAMENT THAT APPEASR TO
BE AN OPTOMISTIC EXPECTATION.
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